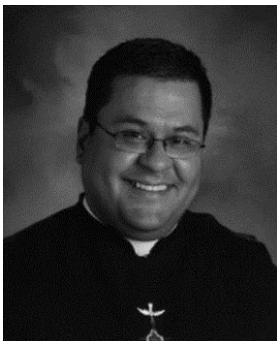


PASTOR'S NOTE



Dear Brothers and Sister of St. Matthew,

Could anyone object to Jesus' supreme lesson in mercy, the parable of the Good Samaritan? Jesus' devoutly religious audience certainly did! Scant sympathy for anyone foolish enough to travel crime-ridden "Jericho Highway" alone. Much sympathy for priest and Levite, hurrying to assigned temple ministry, unwilling to risk ritual impurity through hands-on mercy. No sympathy for Jesus' scandalous hero. Samaritans were religious apostates and political enemies. Jesus challenges them—and us—to seek God's presence not only in liturgical beauty but in a fellow traveler's self-inflicted misfortunes. See God's presence even in someone outside the law, whose hands-on mercy springs not from religious obligation but from the heart's instinctive goodness. Since Jesus became our "Good Samaritan" despite our foolishness and sins, who are we to ration our mercy? "Who is my neighbor?" (Luke 10:29). The next person we see who needs hands-on mercy: no conditions, no limits, no exceptions. Especially in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, Jesus commands, "Go and do likewise." (Luke 10:37). Evangelization in our modern day context compels us to make our own the gospel message and possess a willingness to share the Gospel. May the Holy Spirit continue to inspire us to reach out to our brothers and sisters in most need so that we can be the good 'Samaritans' and live out the two-fold dimension of compassion and solidarity. We are very fortunate to have our St. Vincent de Paul volunteers help many people who need a helping hand. What more may the Lord be asking of you and me to live out the Gospel message? How can I be a good 'Samaritan' to my family, friends, neighbors, and people I encounter?



Blessings,

*Fr. Hugo, MSpS
Pastor*